The NATURE of the KINGDOM, or Church of Christ, as set forth in Holy Scripture.

Theology
Bund 2.

IN A

SERMON

Preach'd at

St. MARGT. LOTHBURY, *London.*

JUNE 2. 1717.

Occasioned by

The BISHOP of *Bangor's*

NOTIONS

Lately Published upon that Subject.

By SAMUEL HILLIARD, *M. A.* Prebendary of *Lincoln*, and Lecturer of St. *Margaret Lothbury, London.*

Published at the Request of the Parishioners.

LONDON:

Printed for the Author, and sold by *J. Morphew* near *Stationers-Hall.* Price Six-pence.

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To the *Worthy* and *Zealous Members of the Church of* England, in the Pariſh of St. *Margaret Lothbury*, London.

GENTLEMEN,

SINCE You *have been pleaſed to requeſt a* Publication *of the following Diſcourſe, and* imagine *it may be of Service in* Your Neighbourhood, *to prevent the ſpreading of thoſe* malignant Principles *which have been induſtriouſly handed about* from Houſe to Houſe among you, *and given ſo much* Offence *to the* Clergy and Laity of our Church, *I muſt declare, that I don't hereby* intend, *neither do I ever* deſire *to have* any thing to do *with* The Biſhop of *Bangor*, *or his* wonderful Performances (*however I may be put out of the Way of* Preferment *by it.*) *My* only Aim *is to ſet forth* the Doctrine contained in the Holy Scriptures,

concerning the Nature of the Kingdom, or Church of Christ; *and if there be any* Contradiction *between* that *and his* Lordship's Notions, *it is not owing to any Contrariety in me* to the Bishop, *but of* his Lordship to my Bible. *I remember when the Book falsly called,* The Rights of the Christian Church, *was first published, I had a mortal Aversion to its* Principles, *and I can't forbear saying that my Gall always breaks whenever I hear 'em* reviv'd. *The Opposing and Confuting 'em is a Cause every* Christian, *who hath a Value for Religion, ought to espouse; neither* Whigg *nor* Tory *are unconcern'd in it; for this Set of* Principles *tends to overthrow all* Religion, *being levell'd as well against the* Presbyterian Ministry *and* Ministration, *as the* Episcopal: *Nay! against* Christianity *it self, and will introduce* Blasphemy, Atheism, Deism, Anarchy *and* Confusion, *as cannot but appear to every* impartial Judge, *who has read the* Bible, *and compares* those Notions *with it.*

Whe-

The Dedication.

Whether there be any Harmony between the Biſhop of *Bangor*, *and the* Book of the Rights, *which was not long ſince cenſur'd by* Parliament, *and burnt by the Hands of the* Common Hangman, *take the following* Quotations, *and judge ye.*

Book of the Rights, p. 108.

Among Chriſtians one no more than another can be reckoned a Prieſt from Scripture: The Clark has as good a Title to the Prieſthood, as the Parſon. *P.* 109. A Pretence to a Prieſthood not in common to all Chriſtians, is no ſmall Piece of Prieſtcraft. 137. Lay-men may exerciſe the Eccleſiaſtical Function. *P.* 24. None has a Right to preſcribe to another, but every one has a Negative; ſo that there is a perfect Equality: For no Man has any Power over another, that another has not over him. *P.* 132. The Office of Preaching ought to be in common, which every one has a Right to exerciſe. The ſame may be ſaid, (*p.* 135.) for the Laity's Baptiſing, if every Chriſtian is capable of performing the Subſtantials of Religion, it is abſurd to imagine he is not capable of ſuch Circumſtances, as Praying aloud,

Biſhop of Bangor's *Ser.* p. 30.

All Chriſt's Subjects are equally his Subjects, and as ſuch, equally without Authority, to alter, to add to, or to interpret his Laws, ſo as to claim the abſolute Submiſſion of others to ſuch Interpretation, *Preſervative.* P. 101. The Scriptures were written for you, and they need no Interpreter; all depends upon God and your ſelves; human Benedictions, human Abſolutions, human Denunciations, human Excommunications, have nothing to do with the Favour or Anger of God; and *p.* 98. Be not afraid of the Terrors of Men, or the vain Words of Regular and Uninterrupted Succeſſions, Authoritative Benedictions, Excommunications, or Abſolutions, Nullity, or Validity of God's Ordinances to the People, upon Account of Niceties and Trifles, or any other the like Dreams. *P.* 91. To claim

aloud, Distributing the Bread and Wine; or, according to the present Mode, Sprinkling an Infant, and Repeating a set Form of Words. *P.* 178. The People chusing a Person to execute an Ecclesiastical Office, is sufficient to give him a Right thereto. 108. In making Ecclesiastical Laws or Persons, or inflicting Ecclesiastical Censures, or in the managing any other Ecclesiastical Matters, the Clergy can claim no more by divine Right, than any other Members of the Church. *P.* 47. An independent Right in the Clergy of Deprivation, and Excommunication, and Ordination, does not only clash, but it is wholly inconsistent with the Magistrate's Civil Power. 25. The Magistrates annexing Profits to the Teachers of their own Religion, occasions Men to suppose there are Umpires, Judges, or Governours, in religious as well as civil Matters.

claim a Right to stand in God's stead, in such a Sense, that they with all their Infirmities, and Prejudices, and Mistakes about 'em, can absolutely bless some, or withhold a Blessing from others; and that God Almighty has obliged himself to bless, or not to bless with their Voice alone, this is the highest Absurdity, and Blaspemy. *Ser.* p. 11. Christ has left behind him no visible human Authority, no Vicegerents who can be said properly to supply his Place, no Interpreters upon whom his Subjects are absolutely to depend, no Judges over the Consciences or Religion of his People.

How far Simeon *and* Levi *are agreed in these Points, how highly pernicious and destructive to the* Peace *of both* Church *and* State, *and what great Advantage the Propagating these* Principles *will give to* Atheists, *and the* wildest Sectaries, *is too flagrant to be conceal'd.*

People

The Dedication.

People *have been ſo bewilder'd of* late Days *by* Time-Servers, *who have advanced Notions* forward *and* backward, *branding that for* Error *at one time, which they* preach up for ſound Doctrine *at another, that many ſeem to be at a* Loſs whom *to believe, or what* to think. *It is high time for us to have Recourſe* to the Law, and to the Teſtimony, *to adhere firmly to the* Doctrines *of our moſt excellent* Church, *and maintain its* ſound Principles, *in Oppoſition to all Temporizers and* Gainſayers. *Errors* in Judgment *muſt corrupt the* Underſtanding, *and tend by Degrees to diſturb the* Minds, *and debauch the* Manners *of the Age. If therefore there be any regard to be had to our* SINKING CONSTITUTION, *any Concern for* EXPIRING RELIGION, *or one Spark of* ZEAL *for* Chriſtianity it ſelf *left among us, it ſhould excite every ſober* Chriſtian *to exert* his utmoſt Efforts *towards putting a Stop to ſuch prevailing* Impiety.

That

The Dedication.

That the following Diſcourſe *may* contribute *to ſo good an* End, *is the hearty Prayer of*

Gentlemen,

Your moſt Obliged,

Humble Servant,

SAMUEL HILLIARD.

Mat. vi. former Part of *v.* 10.

Thy Kingdom come.

THE Text is the Second *Petition* in our *Lord's Prayer*, which with the *Subſequent* are very fitly ſubjoin'd, as the moſt *proper* and ſuitable *Means* to that ſublime and bleſſed *End* which is propos'd and *pray'd* for in *the Firſt*; ſince whereſoever *God's Kingdom* is moſt advanc'd, and *his Will* perform'd, *his Name* is beſt *hallowed* and honoured.

For the better illuſtrating the Text, we may obſerve theſe two ſeveral Parts contain'd in it.

The *Object* of our Prayer, *Thy Kingdom*, and,

The *Petition* itſelf, *Let it come.*

The holy *Scriptures* tell us, that *Sin*, the *Devil* and *Antichriſt* have a *Kingdom*, but by way of Contradiction to all *theſe*, we are here inſtructed, to *pray* that *our heavenly Father's Kingdom* may be erected in *their* Ruin, exalted in *their* Downfall, and that *their Deſtruction* may make way for its *Coming*.

Our Father in this *Prayer* is taken *eſſentially*, ſo as to include the whole ever *Bleſſed Trinity*, who having an *equal* and joint *Authority*,

rity, are to be alike *Hallowed*; yet I conceive our *Saviour Christ's Kingdom, the Kingdom of the Son* is here principally intended, *all Power both in Heaven and upon Earth, being committed unto him*: However then some Modern *Step-Fathers of the Church*, have been endeavouring to exclude our *Saviour's Authority, Empire* and *Government* out of this World, and would perſuade he has *no Kingdom*, or any thing to do in it, whereby the *Church of Chriſt* is *betray'd* and given up by *falſe Diſciples*, as our *Lord's Perſon* was by the Traytor *Judas*; yet if we have Recourſe to *the good Word of God*, we ſhall be fully ſatisfied, that though our *Saviour's Kingdom is not of this World*, he *has exercis'd* and *maintain'd* a certain *Kingdom and Government* in *it*. For the Proſperity of which, the holy Jeſus himſelf has taught us to Pray *to our Father which is in Heaven*, under this Phraſe, *that it may come*. *By Chriſt's Kingdom* therefore is here meant,

Firſt, His *Univerſal Empire* or Sovereignty over the World. Or,

Secondly, His more particular and limited *Royalty and Juriſdiction in his Church*.

As touching the *Firſt* of theſe, *our Bleſſed Lord* in *general*, has an *Univerſal Empire* and *Sovereignty* over *the whole World*, as he is *Lord of it*, and Exerciſes an *Authoritative Juriſdiction* over all the *Creatures*, the Apoſtle St. *Paul* declares 2 *Phil.* 9. 10. *God hath highly*

highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee shou'd bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth; which (however deſtitute of an inward Principle of Reaſon to direct their Motions) acknowledge *his Sovereignty*, by acting in their *low* Sphere and *Capacity*, as the Subjects of his *Providential Kingdom* which *ruleth over all.* He is *Lord* and *Governor* of all the *Sons of Men*, as well as of the *inſenſible Parts* of the *Creation*. *Mankind* come into the World with *his Laws* written upon *their Hearts*, and their *Conſciences* as an inward Monitor inſtruct 'em in the differences of *Good* and *Evil*, and inſtigate to an Obedience to him *who Enlightens every one that comes into the World:* And tho' many do Violence to their *Reaſon*, by ſinning againſt the clear Convictions of their *Conſciences*, yet 'tis not in the *Power* of *Men* or *Devils*, totally to extinguiſh and raze out thoſe Impreſſions *he* has made upon their Minds: In this Senſe we are to underſtand that of the *Apoſtle*, where he ſays, *Chriſt is the Head of every Man*, not that *he* derives as the *Head* to the Members influences of Life, but as the *Magiſtrate* (the *Head* of the Body Politick for its *Government*) is *the Head* of the *City* and bears Rule, all being under *his Authority*; even the *Fowls* of the Air, the *Fiſh* of the

Sea, the *Beasts* of the Field, the *Stars* of Heaven, and the *Devils* themselves are within the Territories of *his* absolute and universal *Kingdom*, 135. *Psal.* vi. 7. *Whatsoever the Lord pleas'd, that did he in Heaven and in Earth, in the Seas, and all deep Places; he causes the Vapours to ascend, he maketh Lightnings, he bringeth the Wind out of their Treasuries; Winds and Seas* (be they never so boisterous and unruly) are hush'd at *the Word of his Mouth.* At *his Birth*, the Host of *Angels* (those heavenly Glories) attended and celebrated *the Solemnity:* In *his Life*, the *Devils* were Subject to *his Power*, Diseases knew *his Voice*, and departed Souls return'd at the *Word of his Command:* At *his Death* the *Rocks clave asunder*, the Graves surrender'd up their *dead* Bodies, and the *Sun* hid its Face, (evident *Instances of* unlimited and *uncontrolable Sovereignty.*)

This *Kingdom* is not *here* intended, for this is already *come*, and in its Perfection; in Reference to *this Kingdom*, *we* only *Pray* that it may be *acknowledg'd* by Us, und that all *Events* whatever be *ascrib'd* to God's *disposal*, and not the *Effect* of blind *Fortune*, *Chance* and *Casualty*, that this *Providential Kingdom* be so *own'd* as not to *conclude* upon Futurities without the *Interposition* of God's *Government*, as St. *James* reprehends some iv. 13, 15. *who say we will go into such a City, and continue*

tinue there a Year, and buy and ſell, and get gain, whereas they ought to ſay, if the Lord will, we ſhall live and do this or that. And again, in Reference to *this univerſal Kingdom*, we pray, that all things by *God's Wiſdom* and *Power*, may be order'd and over-rul'd to *his Glory*, and *his Church's* good.

But that which, I apprehend, is chiefly *intended* by *this Petition*, is our Bleſſed Saviour's *Mediatory Kingdom*, wherewith the Holy Jeſus is inveſted by a particular *Unction* and Donation *from the Father*, in which Senſe, *the Church* is our *Lord's peculiar Dominion*, as St. *Paul* has it, *Epheſ.* xxii. 23. *he hath put all Things under his Feet, and gave him to be Head over all Things to the Church, which is his Body.* This is a *deputed* Diſpenſatory *Kingdom*, not *as God*, but *as Immanuel*, and *Mediator* between *God* and *Man*; a *Royalty* that belongs to *Him*, not by an *Hereditary Right* of natural Generation, but a voluntary *Unction* and ſuper-added *Donation* from *his Father*, *I have ſet my King upon my holy Hill of* Sion, *I will make him higher than the Kings of the Earth*, God has anointed his ever bleſſed *Son* with *Sovereign Power* and Command to eſtabliſh and promulge *Laws*, and govern *Subjects* by his *Scepter*, *which* delegated *Empire* and Authority, (*when he has ſubdued his Enemies, and put all Things under his Feet,*) he will *reſign and deliver up to God his Father*, from

from whom *he* receiv'd it: Till *then*, he ſhall Exerciſe his *Royal Power* and *Authority* to all thoſe Purpoſes for which *his Father* hath *put* it into *his Hands*.

This Government of our Bleſſed Saviour's *here upon Earth*, is apparent both in the

External Œconomy of it, and its

Internal Efficacy.

The *External Adminiſtration* is many times expreſs'd by the Title of *the Kingdom of Heaven*, as at *Matth.* xii. 11. *to you it is given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven*; ſo again, when it is ſaid, *the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Man who ſow'd good Seed in his Field*, Matth. xiii. 24. and *v.* 52. he compares *it* to an *Houſe-holder bringing forth old and new Things out of his Treaſures*, and xx. 1. To *one who went out early in the Morning to hire Labourers into his Vineyard*, and xiii. 31. *The Kingdom of Heaven is as a grain of Muſtard-Seed*, and *v.* 33. he likens it *to Leaven*, and again *v.* 44. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto hid Treaſure*, and *v.* 47. *to a Drag-net caſt into the Sea, that gather'd of every kind*, to a *Merchant ſeeking Pearls of Price*: And in another Place, when our Bleſſed Saviour tells the *Jews*, *the Kingdom of God is come among you*, Matth. xii. 28. or *the Kingdom of God is taken from you*, Matt. xxi. 43. He means the *Regnum Evangelij*, *his External Kingdom*, which is in *this World*, tho'

tho' not *of this World*. That our Lord has such a *Kingdom upon Earth*, is undeniably evident from the *external* OEconomy, and *political* Administration of it; for

We find the *Holy Jesus* exercises the *sole Government*, and *an independent Power* over *his Church*, distinct from *any Civil Authority* in the World; Witness his *giving Laws* and Ordinances to be kept and observed by all who profess *Christianity*, and become *Subjects* of his *Kingdom* by *Baptism*. This is a *Primacy*, and most eminent *Art* of *Government*, wherefore our Lord *authoritatively* promulged and enacted Laws for the Practice of his *Church* and People, till *his coming again*; hence it was that he so excellently refin'd the *Principles of Natural Religion*, the Dictates of right Reasoning, and explain'd the *Old Law* given by *Moses*, setting it in a true *Light*, *free* from the *false Glosses*, and corrupt Comments of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and *superadded more*, *full*, *clear*, and *plain* Ones in the Revelation of the *Gospel* (as Instances of his *sovereign Power*, and *Royal Authority*) wherefore the Prophet *Isaiah* says of *him*, *the Lord is our Judge*, *the Lord is our Law-giver*, *and our King*. The Laws of earthly Princes, are, it is true, to be *obey'd* by us, *not only for Wrath*, *but Conscience sake*; yet that our Obedience is not due to them *immediately*, but as *they* derive *their Authority* from his *Sanction* who has

has required *every Soul to be in Subjection to the higher Powers:* And *their Laws* are *more* or *leſs pure* and *juſt*, as they are conſonant *with*, or diſagreeable to the *Laws of Chriſt.* In Caſe of their Contrariety, *his Laws only* are to be the Meaſure of our *Obedience, God is to be obey'd rather than Man,* We *are not to fear them who only can kill the Body, but him who can deſtroy both Soul and Body in Hell.*

And as our *Saviour Chriſt's Government in the World* is ſo *abſolute*, that not only the *Authority*, but the *Laws* of all earthly *Kings* and *Princes* are under the *Juriſdiction* and *Reſtriction* of *his*, ſo has his *Sovereign Power*, abrogated and aboliſh'd ſeveral *old Ones* that were promulg'd even by *God's own* Appointment, *blotting out the Hand Writing of Ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way nailing it to his Croſs*, 2 Coloſ. 14. he made void ceremonial Injunctions. Beſides this taking away the *Obligation* of *many Laws* then in Force, *he* enacted ſeveral *new ones*, ſuch as univerſal *Meekneſs*, *Patience*, and *Humility*, nay, his *whole Goſpel* is call'd the *Law of Faith*, 3. Rom. 27. The Chriſtian *Sabbath* and *Sacraments*, *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*, are eſtabliſhed by the *Authority* of his Command, and the *Reſult* of his *Legiſlative Power*,

Power, wherefore the *One* is call'd the *Lord's Day*, and the *other his Supper*.

Add to this of his *giving Laws*, which is the *Strength* and *Beauty* of all *Government*; his Appointing and *Authorising Officers* in the *Church*, to be his *Representatives*, to manage and tranſact the Affairs of *his Kingdom*.

Its one Part of *Princely Power* to put Perſons into Places of *Truſt* and Subordinate *Authority*, to manage and promote the Welfare of it, where *he himſelf* cannot be preſent in *Perſon*. Thus, when the Affairs of the Church call'd back our *Bleſſed Saviour* into *Heaven*, he *Mark* iii. 14. ſubſtituted *Apoſtles* for the *Government* and *Inſtruction* of it, made *them Stewards* and Diſpenſers of his *holy Word* and *Sacraments*, and *gave* 'em full and ample *Authority* in *his Name* to execute their Sacred Function; *Now then* (ſays St. *Paul* of *himſelf* and his *Fellow Apoſtles*,) 2 Cor. v. 20. *We are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as tho' God did beſeech you by us.*

How falſly and abſurdly then is it ſaid, "Our Saviour Chriſt has left behind him no "viſible human Authority, no Vicegerents "who properly Supply his Place, no Interpreters upon whom his Subjects are abſolutely to depend, no Judges over the Conſciences or Religion of his People. (*Biſhop Bangor's Serm.* p. 11.)

" All his Subjects are equally his Subjects,
" and as such equally without Authority, to al-
" ter, to add to, or to interpret his Laws;
" and that to claim a Right to stand in God's
" stead, is the highest Absurdity and Blasphe-
" my." Especially when it is considered, that upon the *Holy Jesus*'s *ascending upon high*, he chose by the Royal Act of delegating and appointing Officers in his *Church*, to honour and advance the Solemnity of his Coronation, he *gave some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying the Body of Christ.* As *his Father* sent *him*, even so did *he* send *them*, *John* xx. 21. Not only with the *same Gifts*, but also with the *same Power* and *Authority* that he received from *his Father*, that they might act in his *Absence* as tho' he were *present*, and negotiate the great *Work* of *Salvation*, by a delegate Power from him. *Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptising them, and lo! I am with you alway unto the End of the World*; which Expression plainly implies, that he would with his *Grace* and holy *Spirit* remain *with*, and assist *them*, and *their Successors* till that time; for *they* not being exempt from Death (the common Fate of all Mankind) our Lord could not be with them in their *Persons*, but only in their *Succession*, the lawful *Ministers* who should be *ordained* by the *Bishops* and *Pastors* they should

appoint

appoint from time to time, to the *End of the World*, that is, to his *ſecond Coming* to *Judgment*: The *Commiſſion* therefore given to the *Apoſtles* by our *Bleſſed Saviour*, tho' made *perſonally* to *them*, yet did not *expire* with *them*; for by this *Charter* of our Lord's, *they* were impowered to ordain a *Succeſſion*; as his *Father* gave him Power to *ſend them*, ſo gave *he them* Power *to ſend others*, and to give *them* likewiſe *the ſame miſſive Power* which *he* gave unto *them*, even as his *Father* had given to *him*; as he *breathed the Holy Ghoſt* upon *them*, in like manner have they transferred the *ſame* upon *all their Succeſſors* to this Day; as the *Apoſtles* were left the *Governours of the Church*, as *Chriſt* was, ſo have the *Biſhops* been, the *Apoſtles Succeſſors* ever ſince.

St. *Paul* himſelf left *Titus in Crete*, who ordained *Timothy* by the *Impoſition of his Hands*, in Succeſſion *Timothy* and *Titus* are directed to *lay Hands upon others*; and that we might be ſatisfied *their Authority* was not to die with *them*, he ſtrictly charges *Timothy*, that *the Commandments and Directions which he gave him ſhould be kept inviolable, until the appearing of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and therefore by all ſuch as ſhould have the *ſame Authority*, until the End of the World; for the great Apoſtle gives him not this *ſtrict Command* out of any *Diſtruſt* he had of *Timothy*'s Care, but for his *Succeſſors ſake*, that *they*, after his Ex-

ample, might continue the *well-ordering* the Church, *these* are the Persons he so particularly *charges before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, to be instant in season and out of season, in preaching the word, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with all long-suffering and Doctrine, who are therefore* call'd *Stewards of the Mysteries of God, Rulers over his Houshold, to give 'em Meat in due Season*, they are for that End injoin'd *to feed the young with the sincere Milk of the Word*, by which they may be brought up in *spiritual Life*, and *the old who have their Senses exercis'd to discern both good and evil, with strong Meat to lead 'em on to Perfection*, Heb. v. 12. 14.

These *Officers of our Saviour's Kingdom*, are farther authoriz'd to *declare* and pro-
" nounce to his People being penitent, the
" *Absolution* and Remission of *their Sins.*

The pardoning *Malefactors*, and passing *Acts of Indemnity*, belong to the *supream Power. Christ* our *Saviour ruleth over all*, and declares his *Royal Authority*, by publishing an universal Decree of *Pardon* and *Forgiveness* to all who truly and sincerely *repent*, and *turn* to him, *be of good cheer*, says our Blessed Lord *to the sick of the Palsie, thy Sins are forgiven thee*; and when the *Scribes* were scandaliz'd at it, imagining he usurped an *Authority* that *belonged* not to *him*, he gives this Account of it: *He who could say to him, rise*

up *and walk, had a Power to forgive Sins,* 'twas for this end, he *gave himſelf a Ranſom for us, that Forgiveneſs of Sins might be Preach'd thro' his Name.* And tho' you of the Chriſtian Laity have been told, "Humane "Benedictions, humane Abſolutions, humane "Denunciations, have nothing to do with the Favour of God." (*Preſer.* 101.) Yet

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has left *Power* to his Church to *abſolve all Sinners*, who *truly repent* and *believe in him*, in the Ordination of *every Prieſt*, the *Commiſſion* runs thus, "Receive thou the Holy Ghoſt, for the Office "and Work of a Prieſt in the Church of God, "now *committed unto thee*, by the Impoſition "of *our Hands*, whoſe Sins thou doſt forgive "they are forgiven; and whoſe Sins thou "doſt retain, they are retain'd, and be thou "a faithful Diſpenſer of the Word of God, "and of his holy Sacraments.

And in purſuance of this *Commiſſion*, "When "any Sick Perſon is troubled in Conſcience "on any weighty Matter, upon Confeſſion, "and humbly deſiring it, the Prieſt is to Ab-"ſolve 'em after this Sort: Our Lord Jeſus "Chriſt, who has left Power to his Church, "to Abſolve all Sinners, who truly Repent and "Believe in him, of his great Mercy forgive "thee thine Offences, *and by his Authority committed unto me, I abſolve thee from all thy Sins*, in the Name of the Father, and

"of

" of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.

Our *Bleſſed Saviour* having ſo fully " given " *Power* and Commandment to his Miniſters " to declare and pronounce to his People being " Penitent, the *Abſolution* and Remiſſion of " their *Sins* upon their Repentance, " he has made it *their* Duty to *Rebuke them that Sin* and continue impenitent, *before all that others may fear*, 1 Tim. 5. 20. and when *Rebukes* and *Exhortations* are ineffectual, when People are ſtubborn and incompliant obſtinate and Refractory, that *Admonitions* do no good towards their *Reformation*, to exert *the Power of the Keys*, and *deliver 'em over to Satan*, 1 Cor. v. 5. As unworthy the *Communion of Saints*, that being cut off from *the Body of Chriſt*, and baniſh'd his *Kingdom* the *Church*, *they may renew themſelves again by Repentance*, or elſe be *Anathema Maranatha*. This St. *Paul* declares in the Caſe of the *inceſtuous Perſon*, *denying the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and other notorious Crimes; but *they have not ſo learn'd Chriſt*, who lay it down for Doctrine, that " humane Denunciations and Excommunicati- " ons, are but Engines permitted to work for " a Time, meer outcries of human Terror, " the Terrors of Men and vain Words. " (*Preſer.* p. 101.) and,

" As ſoon as you hear of the Engines of " this World, whether the greater or leſſer " Sort, you muſt immediately think, that there

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" and ſo far, the Kingdom of this World takes " Place——to apply Force to Flattery, world- " Pleaſure or Pain is to act contrary to the " Intereſt of true Religion." However boldly this is ſaid in Holy Writ, we find it *given in Commandment* to the *Governors of Chriſt's Church, that they meet in the Name and Power of the Lord Jeſus, to deliver ſuch to Satan, for the Deſtruction of the Fleſh, that the Spirit may be ſav'd in the Day of the Lord Jeſus*, 1 Cor. iii. 5. Here's no exception of Perſons, *wicked* and *apoſtate Kings* and *Princes* are no more exempted than their *profligate Subjects*; for our Saviour declares, *Mat.* xviii. 17. *If any neglect to hear the Church he is to be unto us as an heathen Man, and a Publican, and verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be loos'd in Heaven.* In a Word,

The Miniſters of *Chriſt's Kingdom*, the *Church here below*, are to *feed the Church of God* committed to their Charge, in all the various Neceſſities of *their Souls*, wherefore they are call'd, *the Lights of the World*, Mat. v. 14. *The Salt of the Earth*, Mat. v. 13. *Miniſters of the Goſpel*, Coloſ. i. 23. *Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. xv. 16. *Miniſters of God*, 1 Theſ. iii. 2. *Embaſſadors of God*, 2 Cor. v. 20. and *Stewards of the Myſteries of God*, 1 Cor. iv. 1. And in the Exerciſe of their

their *Office*, they are ſaid to act *in God's Name*, and in *Chriſt's Stead*, 2 Cor. v. 20. St. *James* particularly directs *Chriſtians when ſick to ſend for the* Elders or Miniſters of *the Church to pray over 'em*, 5. 14. And St. *Peter* 1, 5, 2 exhorts *the Miniſters of God to feed the Flock of God*, and enjoins the People to be obedient to 'em. *They are Labourers then together with God*, 1 Cor. iii. 9. and by their Miniſtry People are to be *edified and built up in the moſt holy Faith*, Coloſ. 2. 7. wherefore they are commanded to *know them who are over 'em in the Lord, and to eſteem 'em very highly in love for their Works ſake*, 1 Theſ. 5. 13. nay, to take due *Care* of 'em, that *they who preach the Goſpel may live of the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. ix. 13. 14.

Thus you ſee our *Bleſſed Lord and Saviour* exerciſes *Government* in the *Kingdom* of his *Church here on Earth*, by *preſcribing Laws, appointing Miniſters and Officers*, fixing *their Duty*, and providing for their *Eſteem* and *Maintenance in the World*, till his Coming again.

Add to this the continual *Protection* and *Defence* which the *Holy Jeſus* gives to *his Church* and People.

The *Power* of *all Government* ought to be ſeen and exerted in *Defending* and Preſerving the *Subjects* from the Injuries and Oppreſſions of their *Enemies*, who would infeſt and deſtroy 'em. Now ſuch is the *Government* that our

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Bleſſed Saviour exerciſes over *his Kingdom the Church, that having founded it upon a Rock, the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it,* Mat. xvi 18. In the ſecond Pſalm, where the Churches Enemies are repreſented as *tumultuouſly raging, and the Kings of the Earth, and the Rulers taking Counſel together againſt it*; God mentions *this*, as the moſt effectual *Security*, in deſpite of all the *Malice* and Fury of the haughtieſt *Tyrants*, *boldeſt Uſurpers*, and bloodieſt Perſecutors, that *our King ſits on the holy Hill of Sion, that he who ſitteth in the Heavens ſhall laugh at 'em, the Lord ſhall have 'em in Deriſion.* Tho' Men may plot and contrive never ſo ſecretly, how to deſpoil the *Church* of God, yet *his* watchful *Providence* is a never-failing *Security*; for he *confounds their Devices, and has an Hook in their Noſtrils, that nothing ſhall harm us if we be but Followers of that which is good*; nay, he ſo blaſts and infatuates the Counſels of his People's *Enemies*, that they tend to *their* own utter Ruin and Deſtruction; for the Effect of *his being in the Throne* is, that *All his Enemies are his Footſtool whereby the People fall under him.*

The *Church of God* has in all Ages been expoſed to the ſpiteful *Enmity*, and enraged *Malice* of a wicked World, and had it no other *Support* than its own *Strength*, it muſt have been deſtroyed as a *Flock* encompaſs'd with ravenous

Wolves; wherefore we had need be often *lifting up our Hands and Hearts* to the *Shepherd of Iſrael*, who has taken this impotent and defenceleſs *Flock* into his *Protection:* This is a *Bleſſing* holy *David* often *prayed for*, as *Pſ.* 74. 18. 19. and what *God* has *promiſed to fulfil.* This Petition then implies, that God would *defend* and preſerve his Church in the midſt of all its *Oppoſitions* and *Dangers*, that it may be as *Mount Sion, which cannot be mov'd at any time, but ſtands faſt for ever and ever.* To proceed.

The Subjects of this our *Saviour's Kingdom upon Earth*, who are to be *rul'd* and *govern'd* by *thoſe Laws* and *Miniſters* our Lord has *appointed*, and are under *his Protection*, are all the Members of the *viſible Church* where *Chriſt's Kingdom* is *externally adminiſtred*, and is made up of ſuch a Number of *Perſons* as both by *baptiſmal Engagement*, and *external Profeſſion*, own themſelves under *his Government*, and live in Obedience to his *Appointments:* Theſe at *Mat.* xiii. 38. are called, *the Children of the Kingdom.* This *viſible Church* conſiſts of a Mixture of all Sorts of *Subjects*, *good* and *bad*; there are *barren*, as well as *fruitful Trees* in it, *true Chriſtians* as well as *hypocritical Profeſſors*; for which reaſon, the Holy Jeſus repreſents it as a *Field*, where *Tares and Chaff grow up with the Wheat*; and as an *Houſe, wherein are not only Veſſels of Gold and Silver*,

Silver, but alſo of *Wood*, *and of Earth*, *ſome to honour*, *and ſome to diſhonour*; *Hypocrites* are Members of the *viſible Church*, as well as *Saints*, and take an *Oath of Allegiance* in *Baptiſm*, pretend *Loyalty*, and Obedience, and we can judge no otherwiſe of 'em t H *their Enormities* deprive 'em of the *Privileges* and Protection of the *Church*, by a Sentence of *Excommunication*, which is therefore called by the Evangeliſt, *one of the Keys of the Kingdom*, Mat. xvi. 19. And as it is no Diſhonour to a *Prince*, or his *Government*, to have ſome *wicked Subjects* in his Kingdom (ſo long as *he* himſelf *does not befriend 'em*, and *his Laws* no way *countenance their Miſdemeanours*) ſo neither is it any Reflection *upon*, or Diſparagement *to* the Holy Jeſus, or *his Kingdom*, that the *viſible Church* has in it ſome worldly minded, *ſenſual*, hypocritical *Members*. *He* himſelf has no *Favour* for their *Perſons*, and *his Law* utterly *condemns* their *Practices*. If then we conſider this *Petition*, *Thy Kingdom come*, with reſpect to the *Church*, our Prayer implies, an earneſt and vehement Deſire, that the *Goſpel of Chriſt* may be univerſally *propagated*, that the *Laws of Chriſtianity* may be *publiſh'd* and *promulg'd* far and near, in all the Kingdoms of the World, that they who *ſit in Darkneſs of Judaiſm*, heatheniſh *Idolatry*, or *Mahumetan* Superſtition, may have this glorious *Light* ariſe, and ſhine among 'em in its *Brightneſs*,

that the *Knowledge of the Lord may cover the Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea*, that *God's saving Health may be known among all Nations.* Wherefore the *Son of God* inſtructs *us* who are acquainted with the *Myſteries of his Kingdom*, to compaſſionate the deplorable State of thoſe poor *Souls* who are without the *Light of the Goſpel*, ſtumbling in the Darkneſs of *Atheiſm*, *Ignorance*, *Superſtition* and *Idolatry*; and to pray to God, the Goſpel may every where *thrive* and *proſper*, that all who are *led captive by the Devil at his Will*, may be delivered from the *Power of Darkneſs*, and tranſlated into *the Kingdom of his Son.*

Beſides the *Univerſal Enlargement* of Chriſt's *Kingdom* the *Church*, *here upon Earth*, and a general *Propagation* of its *Doctrine*, and *Eſtabliſhment* of its *Diſcipline*; this *Petition* imports its *Peace* and *Proſperity.*

For tho' all Temporal *Bleſſings* are compriz'd in the *4th Petition* of the *Lord's Prayer*, yet herein the *Peace* and Happineſs of the Church is deſir'd, in order to the *Advancement*, and a more beautiful and flouriſhing State of *Chriſt's Kingdom in the World*, according to that of the Royal *Pſalmiſt*, cxxii. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Pray for the Peace of* Jeruſalem, *they ſhall proſper that love thee, Peace be within thy Walls, and Proſperity within thy Palaces, for my Brethren and Companions ſake, I will now ſay, Peace be within thee, becauſe of the Houſe of*

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the Lord our God I will ſeek thy Good; how ſhou'd every one who names the Name of Chriſt deſire that God would eſtabliſh and make his Church, which is his Kingdom, a Praiſe in the Earth, that Iſai. lx. 17, 18. he may make her Officers Peace, and her Exactors Righteouſneſs, that Violence may be no more heard, nor waſting nor Deſtruction within her Borders; but that we ſhall call her Walls Salvation, and her Gates Praiſe; that God, who is not the Author of Confuſion, would eſtabliſh Peace and Unity, quiet Animoſities, heal its Breaches, put a Stop to ſchiſmatical Separations and fanatical Diſſentions, appeaſe all Janglings, and compoſe Diviſions, that Feuds and Animoſities tear not our Lord's ſeamleſs Garment, nor wound and mangle the myſtical Body of Chriſt, All this we beg, in ſaying thy Kingdom come. The Jews in Captivity, Jer. xxix. 7. were obliig'd to pray for the Peace of Babylon, ſeek the Peace of the City, and pray to the Lord for it, for in the Peace thereof ſhall ye have Peace Much more ought we to ſeek and ſue for the Peace of the Church, that it may be free from Strife and Contention, Oppreſſion and Perſecution; that the odious diſtinctions of Anabaptiſts, Quakers, Presbyterians, Independents, Proteſtant Diſſenters, and other Separatiſts and Schiſmaticks, (which would prophane the Place I am ſpeaking in to mention,) that the whole viperous Brood, (I ſay,) who

diſturb

disturb and divide our Church, may be no more heard of among us, but that we may be all of *one Mind*, and of *one Judgment*, preserving the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, uniting in the Interest of the Church, *that in the Peace thereof, we our selves may have Peace.*

Again, as we are taught thus to Pray for the Peace and Prosperity of Christ's *Kingdom*, so we, in this Petition, pray for its *Perfection* and *Purity*. The Word *come*, here denotes a *Want* of Perfection and Progress thereto, for the Church *in this World* is in a State of Imperfection, being liable to *Errors in Doctrine*, Corruption in *Worship*, and Defects in *Discipline*; and tho' God calls not every *private Christian* to *act* as *a publick Reformer*, that were the way instead of amending *one* Miscarriage, to make *twenty*, yet every one is to *call upon God* to rectify what is amiss, that *he, whose Fan is in his hand, would thoroughly purge his Floor, and* let the Vigour and Vigilancy of *Discipline be restor'd*, that *the Church* may be blessed with good *Order* and *Government*, by a just Execution of the *Office* and *Authority* of its *Bishops* and *Rulers*, and a due *Submission* and Obedience of *those God has subjected to their Authority*, that the *one may feed the Flock of God, and be overseers of it*, and the other *may obey them who have the Rule over 'em, and submit themselves to those who watch for their Souls*; this *God* has con-

onſtituted and *appointed*, and a great *Bleſſing* t is to *his Church*, nay, 'tis ſuch a ſingular *Happineſs* as is *neceſſary* to its very *being* and *ubſiſtence*, as of every other *Corporation* and *Society*; without *which*, the *Church and Kingdom of Chriſt* were not as a Compact *City*, ut confus'd *Multitude*, not as a diſciplin'd *Army*, but a diſorderly *Rout*, not as a well roportion'd *beautiful Body* with Symmetry of arts, but *a deform'd Monſter*, as the Apoſtle rgues, 1 *Cor*, xii. 18. 19. *God has ſet the Members, every one of them in the Body as has pleas'd him, and if they were all one Member where were the Body; now ye are he Body of Chriſt, and Members in particuar, wherefore he has ſet ſome in the Church, irſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, for all are not Apoſtles, all are not Prophets all are not Teachers*; ſo that if any efuſe juſt *Obedience* to thoſe *Guides* and Rulers, God has ſet over them as his *Commiſſion Officers*, (*as the ſtubborn Herd of Diſſenters do*) they have to *anſwer* not *only* for *the Contempt* and *Diſobedience*, but all the fatal *Conſequences* attending *it*, all the *Schiſms* and *Diviſions*, *Diſorders* and *Confuſions* to which t naturally tends; *God is the Author of Peace n all the Churches of the Saints.*

Farther, this *Petition* comprehends our rayers for the *Ruin* and *Deſtruction* of the *hurches Enemies*; that all the implacable Adver

versaries of our *Sion* may be *converted*, or if not, *they* and *their Devices* may be *confounded*, Psal. lxviii. 1. 2. *Let God arise, let his Enemies be scattered, let them also that hate him flee before him, as Smoke is driven away, so drive them away, as Wax melts at the Fire, so let the ungodly perish at the Presence of God.* And *Ps.* lix. 13. *Consume them in Wrath, consume them that they may not be, and let them know that God ruleth in* Jacob, *unto the Ends of the Earth, Selah:* In this Petition then, we beseech Almighty God to regard his *Vineyard*, that *the Boar out of the Wood mayn't waste it, nor the wild Beast of the Field devour it*, but that *God would put an Hook into the Nostrils*, and pull down the Pride and Tyranny of all the *Church's Enemies*, that all be made to stoop to *Christ's golden Scepter*, or crush'd and broke to Pieces with his *Rod of Iron*; so will his *Kingdom rule*, and be establish'd over all. Again,

We hereby *pray*, that God will inspire all *Civil Magistrates*, with an *holy Zeal* for the *Good* of his *Church*, and with an EXEMPLARY PIETY before his People, that they may improve *their Authority* and Interest, and make use of the *Power* God has *given 'em* for the Suppression of *Errors*, *Heresies*, and *Schisms*, which divide his Kingdom, and for the *Maintainance and Encouragement* of the *Church*, and true *Religion*; this is agreeable to that

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Promiſe, *Iſa.* xlix. 23. *That Kings ſhould be nurſing Fathers, and Queens nurſing Mothers to his Church.* It is our Duty *to pray for Kings, and all that are in Authority,* that they may employ *that Power for God,* which they receive *from him,* in countenancing and protecting *Religion* and *Godlineſs,* and the diſcouraging and puniſhing *Vice* and *Profaneneſs,* that they may account themſelves more honoured in *Hallowing God's Name,* than in wearing the *Crown* he has ſet upon their *Heads.*

The *Subjection* of the greateſt *Kings,* and higheſt *Potentates,* is *given* by God to our *Bleſſed Saviour,* as *one* **Part** of his *Principality. They are to kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and they periſh from the Way,* Pſ. ii. 12. and lxxii. 10. 10. *The Kings of Tarſhiſh, and of the Iſles, ſhall bring Preſents, the Kings of Seba and Sheba ſhall offer Gifs, yea all Kings ſhall fall down before him.* Their *Commiſſion* is from *him,* and they are but *his Viceroys. By me Kings reign*; and tho' he allows *them* not to intermeddle *in ſacris,* to preſume to *officiate* in *holy Offices,* no Man can take *this Honour to himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron,* Heb. v. 4. 2. Chron. xxvi. 18. *The Prieſts withſtood Uzziah the King, and ſaid to him, it appertaineth not to thee, Uzziah, to burn Incenſe unto the Lord, but to the Prieſts, the Sons of Aaron, that are conſecrated to burn Incenſe; go out of the Sanctuary, for*

thou haſt treſpaſſed. Yet the *Civil Power* is to be exercis'd *circa ſacra*, in the *Security and Eſtabliſhment* of the Church's *Doctrine* and *Diſcipline.* For however it is ſaid, "An Au- "thority indiſpenſably obliging all around to "Unity of Profeſſion, diveſts *Jeſus Chriſt* of "his Empire in his own Kingdom, proſtitutes "his People's Conſciences at the Feet of "others, who have no Right in ſuch a man- ner to trample upon 'em." (*Ser.* p. 27. and 29.) Our *Lord* and *Saviour* has *impowered* and *appointed Magiſtrates* for the *Good*, *Security*, and *Defence* of his *Church.* *Nehemiah*, *Solomon*, *Aſa*, *Jehoſophat*, *Joſiah*, and *Hezekiah*, thought themſelves *concern'd* in Affairs of *Religion*, and therefore did all they could to extirpate *Idolatry*, to eſtabliſh the true Worſhip of God, and *to encourage the Prieſts and Levites in the Work of the Lord*, 2 Chron xxxi. 4. He *commanded the People of Jeruſalem to give the Portion of the Prieſts and Levites, that they might be encouraged in the Law of the Lord*, 2 Chron. xiv. 4. *Aſa* not only *deſtroyed Idolatry*, but *commanded Judah to ſeek the Lord God of their Fathers, and to do the Law and the Commandment*; and good *Hezekiah*, in Chap. xxix 5. *brought in the Prieſts and the Levites, and commanded that they and the Lord's Houſe ſhould be ſanctified.* And v. 30. he eſtabliſhed a *publick Form of Worſhip*, injoining *the Prieſts to ſing Praiſe unto*

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the Lord, according to *that very Form*. So *Joſiah*, xxxiv. 33. made all that were in *Iſrael to ſerve the Lord their God, and all his Days they departed not from following the Lord the God of their Fathers.*

Beſides this Care, which *Chriſtian Magiſtrates* are concern'd to have for the Security of *Chriſt's Church*, and advancing the Intereſts of *his Kingdom in the World*, by injoining the *Profeſſion*, and encouraging the *Practice* of his *Religion* among the People, *they* are to *reſtrain* and *ſuppreſs* all bold *Oppoſers* of it; ſo *Aſa* Kings xv. 12. 13. *He took away all the Sodomites out of the Hand, and removed all the Idols that his Father had made*; and it is recorded to the *Honour* of all the *godly Kings of Judah*, that *they ſuppreſſed* all *falſe Prophets*, and *idolatrous Worſhip*: Nay, we find that the *heathen Prince Nebuchadnezzar*, when a *Miracle* had convinc'd him of the *true Religion*, made a publick *Edict* and *Decree*, that none ſhould dare to *affront* and *reproach* it, under no leſs a Penalty than that of being *cut in pieces, and having their Houſes made a Dunghill*, Dan. iii. 29. Our *Bleſſed Saviour* has for this *End* only put a *Scepter* into the Hands of *Kings* and *Princes*, that it may be ſwayed in Subordination to *his Kingdom*, Pſ. lxxviii. 70. 71. When therefore *we pray*, that *his Kingdom may come*, we implore that he will be graciouſly pleaſed to bleſs *Chriſtian Magiſtrates*,

Kings and *Princes*, and *diſpoſe their Hearts to ſeek God's Honour and Glory, to promote the Intereſts and Welfare of the Church, and ſtudy to preſerve* it againſt all its Enemies, in *Wealth, Peace, and Godlineſs.*

Another thing included in *this Petition*, is that God will be pleaſed to inſpire *the Miniſters of his* Kingdom here upon Earth, with *Diligence* and *Fidelity*. *Theſe* are ſet apart by *God* for the *Defence* of his *Church*; to this *End* he has appointed 'em a *Place* and *Station* in it, a ſacred Office, and holy Function, that they may by *an earneſt contending for (inſtead of betraying) the Faith, watch in all things, and make full Proof of their Miniſtry, becauſe there are many unruly and vain Talkers and Deceivers, who ſubvert whole Houſes, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy Lucre's ſake, whoſe Mouths muſt be ſtopt.* The *Miniſters of his Church* are to avoid all *falſe Brethren, Time-ſervers*, or *Encouragers of its Enemies, to hold faſt the faithful Word they have been taught, and by ſound Doctrine convince Gainſayers.* The *Church* and *Kingdom of Chriſt* has always been peſter'd with *Seducers*, and *Spreaders of falſe Doctrines*, for the *detecting* which, that the *Faith* may be preſerved *uncorrupt*, our Lord hath in an eſpecial Manner made it the *Buſineſs* and *Concern* of *all who wait at his Altar*, to aſſert his *Truths*, confute the Cavils of its *Adverſaries*, eſpouſe the

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Cauſe of the *Church*, and exerciſe the Powers and Abilities *God* has bleſſed 'em with, for the Protection of its *Intereſt*, and *Security* in the *World*; hereby they only can diſcharge that Obligation every one who is admitted into *holy Orders*, lays himſelf under, " to be always ready " with faithful Diligence, to baniſh and drive " away all erroneous and ſtrange Doctrine con- " trary to God's Word," ſo will they make good that Promiſe, *Jer.* iii. 15. *I will give you Paſtors according to my Heart, who ſhall feed you with Knowledge and Underſtanding*; when therefore we ſay, *thy Kingdom come*, we do in Effect ſay, let none *O Lord* whom thou haſt truſted with the *Care* and Charge *of Souls*, be *Ignorant*, *Idle*, or *Falſe* to their *Miniſtry*, *doing the Work of the Lord deceitfully*, but make 'em *ſound* and *uncorrupt*, both in *Life* and *Doctrine*, that they may truly and faithfully *take heed to themſelves, and all the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made 'em overſeers, to feed the Church of God which he has purchas'd with his Blood, that they may ſave themſelves and all that hear 'em.*

Having thus accounted for the *External* OEconomy, or *outward Adminiſtration* of our *Saviour's Kingdom here upon Earth*, for the proſperous State of which, we are taught to *Pray*; the laſt Thing conſiderable, is its *Internal Juriſdiction* in the Hearts and Conſciencs of *his People*, which is no leſs our

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Bleſſed Lord's *peculiar Royalty*, and where he *rules Abſolutely* by the *Power* of his *holy Word* and ever Bleſſed *Spirit*.

This Kingdom is conſiderable by *us*, as it Reſpects its *Inchoation and Progreſs* under a State of *Grace here*, and its *Conſummation* or *Perfection* in a State of *Glory hereafter*, both which are but the *ſame Kingdom* (tho' they differ in *Place*, *Priviledge* and manner of *Adminiſtration*;) thus St. *Paul* unites them, 1 *Theſ.* ii. 12. when he Exhorts us to *walk worthy of God, who has call'd us unto his Kingdom and Glory, that* of his *Grace* in this *World*, and of eternal *Happineſs* in the *next*. That of his *Grace* here, is purely *an inward* and *ſpiritual Kingdom*, and is always *Progreſſive*, with reference *to this*. When at *Luke* xvii. 20, 21. our Lord was demanded of the *Phariſees when the Kingdom* of *God ſhould come*, he anſwer'd, and ſaid, *the Kingdom of God cometh not with Obſervation, neither ſhall they ſay, lo here, for behold the Kingdom of God is within you*, and *Rom.* xiv. 17. *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy, in the Holy Ghoſt*: Unleſs then we are *loyal Subjects* of this *Kingdom* of Chriſt's, are bleſs'd with *inward and ſpiritual Grace*, our being Members of the *outward* and *viſible Church*, will be of *little* or *no* Service to us. Our Admiſſion into the Church by *Baptiſm* in *his Name*, or

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frequenting the publick *Assembly* of *Christians*, where his *holy Gospel* is *Preach'd*, and his sacred *Ordinances* duly *administer'd*, are (it's true) very *great* and singular *Priviledges*, but *these* don't constitute the *Kingdom of Grace*, and are not therefore sufficient to intitle us to *that of Glory*. The *Jews* were a *select People*, none under heaven could compare Priviledges with them; to them were *committed the Oracles of God*, to *them* pertain'd the *Adoption and Glory of the Covenant*, *of them* as *concerning the Flesh Christ came*; and yet for all this, our *Saviour* tells them, *Mat.* viii. 12. *Notwithstanding their being so far Children of the Kingdom*, inasmuch as they were otherwise *of their Father the Devil, and lead Captive at his Will, they shou'd be cast into outer Darkness*. For People to make an External *Profession* of Church *Membership*, and say they are *true Sons*, and *are not*, but are the *Synagogue of Satan*, such as pretend a Form of *Godliness*, professing to *know God*, and in *Works deny him*, they are but Rebels and Traytors to *that Kingdom of Christ*, which he has in the *Hearts* and *Souls* of his loyal and dutiful *Subjects*; for *to suffer Sin to keep Possession of our Hearts*, is to thrust out the *holy Jesus* from the Throne we pretend to give him *there*; if we are truly loyal Subjects of *his Kingdom*, we must suffer nothing to stand in Competition with his *Supremacy*, but subdue

due all *Rebels* that oppoſe it, whether they be *the World*, the *Fleſh or the Devil*; hence it is *the Chriſtians* underſtanding is perfectly reſign'd to *his Saviour's Will*, his *Dictates* are receiv'd and aſſented to, as infallible *Truths*, the Meaſure and Standard of *Faith*; *his Will is* perfectly reſign'd, and obedient to every *Command*, his *Conſcience* is wholly ſway'd and directed by him in acquitting or condemning; *his Affections* are fix'd to Prize and Value, Love, *Deſire*, and *Delight* in *him*, above every Competitor; his *Members* and Faculties are imploy'd in aſſerting and vindicating *his Royalty*, being *made Servants of Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs*, faithfully and conſcientiouſly performing *the Will of God in every thing*: When therefore we pray that our *Saviour's Kingdom may come*, with reference to this Part of it, we pray, that whereas we and all Men are *born Enemies* in our Minds by *wicked Works*, and are of *our ſelves* unable to recover *our ſelves* from the *Vaſſalage of* thoſe Uſurpers and Tyrants that lead us *Captvie*; that *our Bleſſed Lord would ſend forth the Rod of his Strength, lead Captivity Captive*, and of *Enemies* make us *loyal and obedient Subjects, a willing People in the Day of his Power, and ſince no Man can come unto Chriſt except the Father draw him, Lord, let* the Power of thy Grace enlighten the *Minds*, ſoften *the Hearts*, quicken *the Souls*, ſubdue

the ſtubborn *Wills*, purge the polluted *Conſciences*, and elevate and refine the *Earthly Affections of all thy People*; in a Word, may the *ſpiritual* Weapons of thy *holy Word*, *caſt down every thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the Knowledge of God, and bring into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Chriſt*; *that being made free from Sin, and become Servants to God, we may have our Fruit unto Holineſs.* Our *Prayer* then is, that we may all impartially and univerſally reſign up both *Body* and *Soul*, *Heart* and *Life* to our *Saviour's Authority*, that our Minds *may be taught* and inſtructed by *him*, our *Wills* ſway'd, our *Conſciences cleans'd*, our Affections *regulated* and *ſpiritualis'd*, and all the *Members of the Body* be ready *Servants* at the Command of their *great Lord.* So again, that *our Graces* may increaſe, thrive, and proſper under *his Kingdom*, that we may daily grow *in Faith, Hope, and Charity, and proceed in all Virtue and Godlineſs of Living, that the new Man created after God in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, may grow up into a perfect Man unto the Meaſure of the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt*: That this *Grace of God* may preſerve us from all our *ghoſtly Enemies*, that we may never apoſtatize from *Chriſt our Saviour*, or blemiſh our Profeſſion of *Love* and *Loyalty*, with a traiterous diſhonourable Revolt from *his Government*: God declares, *Heb.* x. 38.

If any Man draw back, my Soul ſhall have no Pleaſure in him, here therefore we pray, that we may be ſo ſtrengthen'd by *God's Grace* and *holy Spirit*, againſt the Aſſaults of our ſpiritual Enemies, that we may *never fall from our own Stedfaſtneſs*, that God will make good that Promiſe to us, *Jer.* xxxii. 40. *I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.*

But further, by the *Kingdom* of Chriſt is here alſo included (beſides this his internal Juriſdiction over the *Souls* and Conſciences of *his People*, (which conſiſts in an Inchoation and Progreſſion in a State *of Grace*,) the Conſummation or Perfection of his *Kingdom in a State of Glory.*

The *Holy Ghoſt* is pleas'd very frequently in Scripture, to repreſent *the Glory* and Happineſs *of Heaven*, by the Metaphor *of a Kingdom*, that being the moſt ample and illuſtrious of all Earthly *Poſſeſſions*, Luke xii. 32. *It's your Father's good Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom*, and *ch.* xxii. 29. *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*, and *Mat.* xiii. 43. *The Righteous ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, and in another Place, *Come ye bleſſed Children, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you*, to the ſame purpoſe and import, are thoſe other parallel Expreſſions of *Robes*, a *Crown*, a *Throne*, and the like Enſigns and Ornaments

of

of Royalty, that the moſt *glorious Things are ſpoken of thee, O thou Kingdom of God*; *but what* that Glory is, *neither Eye hath ſeen, nor Ear heard, nor can the Heart of Man conceive*, we may as ſoon *comprehend the Stars in the hallow of our Hands*, or empty *the Ocean*, or *Meaſure the Circumference of Heaven with a Span*, as fully declare or conceive *the Glory* and *Bliſs* that is couch'd under thoſe Expreſſions, of *reigning with Chriſt, and ſitting with him upon the Throne of his Glory*, the *bleſſed Saints* and *Angels*, who are ſurrounded *with Heavens* raviſhing Delights and Glories, are fitteſt to Diſcourſe upon this Argument; and yet they would tell us, that no Words can fully reach them; that the cleareſt *Diſcoveries*, the moſt rais'd *Conceptions* they ever attain'd to in this Life, are infinitely ſhort of their preſent Fruitions.

However, thus much we know of it, that it is a perfect Freedom from all *that's evil*, and a bliſsful Fruition of *every thing that's good*; then *Sin* and *Sorrow* will be no more, while we live in this World; *the Law of our Members will be always warring againſt the Law of our Minds, and bringing us into Captivity to the Law of Sin*; and tho' we are cleans'd by *the Blood of Chriſt*, and the Waſhing of *Regeneration*, that the Devil's *Power* is partly brought under, his *Scepter* broken, and his *Throne* demoliſhed by *Chriſt's* powerful Go-

vernment; yet are we often moleſted by Alarms and Inſurrections to *Rebellion*, but in the Kingdom of *Glory*, the Devil's Power ſhall be utterly aboliſh'd, that the People of God, when upon the Borders of *Death*, entering upon his *Bleſſed Kingdom*, may ſay as *Moſes* did upon the Brink of the *red Sea*, Exod. xiv. 13. *Fear ye not, ſtand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of God; for your Enemies whom ye have ſeen, ye ſhall ſee them again no more for ever.* Our *Way* here is encompaſſed with *Dangers*, the *Devil* is frequently aſſaulting our Minds, and with various and *fiery Darts*, endeavours the Deſtruction of Souls. What manifold Temptations do we daily meet with in the *World*? *Riches* tempt to *Pride* and *Oppreſſion*, *Poverty* to careful *Anxiety*, and ſullen *Diſcontent*; *Sickneſs* breeds *Impatience*, *Health*, a ſecure Inſenſibility of *Death*, and a ſtupid Diſregard of *Eternity*; almoſt every thing is a *Temptation* to us, and almoſt every *Temptation* too hard for us: But in the *Kingdom of Glory* nothing will inveigle, or draw off our Hearts from God; for tho' the *Devil* entered the *earthly*, he is everlaſtingly baniſhed the *celeſtial Paradiſe*. Here we are likewiſe ſubject to innumerable *Sorrows* and *Sufferings*; it's *through much Tribulation that we can enter into the Kingdom of God:* Now melancholick Thoughts, *aking Bones*, *a ſick* and *craſy Body*, or the inſufferable Anguiſh of a perplex'd

Soul

Soul, and a *troubled* Mind and *Conſcience*; Croſſes and Loſſes in the *World*, the Death of dear *Friends and Relations*, and a Thouſand *other Diſaſters*, fill our Minds with *Care*, *Grief*, and *Diſcontent*; but the *Kingdom of Glory* is a perfect Deliverance from all theſe, and every thing elſe that is *troubleſome and grievous* to us in this lower World; and not only ſo, but is alſo a *bliſsful* Fruition of all that's *good*. The Place of our reigning with *Chriſt* adds much to the Happineſs of *his Kingdom:* It is the *higheſt Heavens*, wherein we have *an Houſe not made with Hands*, *a City of God's own building*. *Lord*, *remember me*, ſaid the Thief upon the Croſs, *when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom*; to which the ever-bleſſed *Jeſus* anſwered, *Luke* xxiii. 43. *Verily I ſay unto thee*, *to Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*; *Paradiſe!* a Place of inconceivable *Sp endour* and *Beauty*, where he was aſſur'd of his own glorious *Company*, the *Society of Saints* and *Angels*, the *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect*, and the reviving *Preſence of God* whom we *ſhall ſee face to face*, *and live*; *Saints* ſhall there ſing *Moſes*'s Song, and praiſe God not only with *David*'s *Pſalms*, but alſo with *Moſes and David themſelves*. But above all, how will *Believers* then gaze on the *Son of Righteouſneſs*, and view the Radiancy of *glorify'd human Nature*, which here we want Words to make intelligible. By praying then

then that *this Kingdom of Glory* may *come*, we desire and petition for those divine *Graces* of *Faith*, *Hope*, *Love*, *Joy*, *and Heavenly-mindedness*, as may fit our *Souls* for the *Paradise of God*, and make us meet to be Partakers of the *Inheritance with the Saints in Light*. By Nature we are all *Sinners*, Subjects of the *Devil's Kingdom of Death and Darkness*, and fall short of the *Glory of God*. Wherefore in this Petition we pray, that *God* would *begin Heaven in our Hearts*, by bestowing upon us the Earnest of his *Holy Spirit*, that Christ who is *gone into Heaven, to prepare Glory for us*, would send his *Holy Ghost into our Hearts, to qualify us for a blessed Immortality*, give us the *Joy of his Salvation, and seal us to the Day of Redemption, that our Calling and Election may be so assur'd, that an Entrance may be ministred unto us into the Kingdom of God*. By this Petition, *Thy Kingdom come*, we also pray with humble Submission to *God's Will*, that he would bring our *Days of Sin and Misery* to a speedy *Period*, that we may be with *Christ*, which is far *better than to live in this World of Misery and Care*. But some may say, is it lawful for us to desire *Death?* To pursue a *Dissolution of Nature* seems *unnatural*, To which I answer, *Death* is in it self, and for its *own sake* desireable; and for any to desire it, meerly to be rid of the Troubles of *Life*, argues a sinful

ful *Puſillanimity*, as when *Elijah* wanted to get out of the *Rage of Ahab* and *Jezebel*, 1 Kings. xix 4. and *Jonah* when *Nehemiah* was *ſpar'd*, thinking he ſhould be ſlurr'd with the Diſreputation of a *falſe Prophet*, in a Pett, begs for *Death* as a Remedy, *Jonah* iv. 3. This is abominable: But to deſire *Death*, that we may be free from *Sin*, and brought to *Heaven*, is not only *warrantable*, but an Argument of a *gracious Mind*. Luke ii. 29. *Lord now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace, according to thy Word*; and St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *For this we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon with our Houſe, which is from Heaven*; and *Phil* i. 25. *I am in a ſtraight betwixt two, having a Deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* This Prayer alſo includes the *accompliſhing the Number of God's Elect*, that all *who are of the Houſhold of God* may be converted, and called Home to Chriſt, and made living Members of his *myſtical Body*. Every particular Chriſtian, it's true, in the very Inſtant of *Death*, immediately enters into *Paradiſe*, and his *Soul* partakes of unſpeakable Bliſs; but *Chriſt's Kingdom of Glory* can never *come*, till all thoſe who are to be Members of his *myſtical Body*, be incorporated, and it thereby compleat its Fulneſs. When, and not before, *he and they will enter in together, in a triumphant* Magnificence, as our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf declares, *John* xvii. 21. 22. *I pray not for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us, and the Glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.*

Thus we ſay, *thy Kingdom come*, Lord call home the *unbelieving Jew*, convert the *ignorant Gentile*, reduce Straglers into thy *Fold*, that the chief *Shepherd may* appear, and we re-

receive a *Crown of Glory which fades not away*. By this Petition, we likewiſe pray for the *Reſurrection of the Body*, and its re-union with *the Soul*, tho' the Spirits of *juſt Men* are made *perfect* in Heaven, and *Souls* departed are crown'd with all that Bliſs they are capable of in a State of *Separation*, yet a very great Addition will be made, when *the Body* ſhall become a Sharer with it in its *glorified Perfections*, for when part alone is *happy*, that is Happineſs but in *Part*, wherefore we here *pray*, that our *Bodies*, tho' by Death made *Duſt*, and the Food of Worms, may by the *Power of Chriſt be rais'd*, and chang'd into the *Likeneſs of his glorious Body*, and being re-united to the *Soul*, may together be *crown'd with Glory, Honour and Immortality*.

By this Prayer we alſo implore the haſtning of Chriſt's *Kingdom*, our Lord's ſpeeedy Appearance to *Judgment*, according to that of St. *John* in *Rev.* xxii. 17. *The Spirit and the Bride ſay come, and let him that heareth ſay come, and whoſoever will let him take the Water of Life freely*, and *v.* 20. *He which teſtifies theſe Things, ſays, ſurely I come quickly, Amen; even ſo Lord Jeſus:* Not that we can by our Prayers *haſten Chriſt's Kingdom*, alter or anticipate God's *Appointment*, but by ſuch pious and devout *Breathings*, we do the better fit and prepare our ſelves for *his Coming*, and haſten towards it, as St. *Peter* Phraſes it, ii. 3. 12. *Looking for, and haſtning unto the Coming of the Day of God, wherein the Heavens ſhall be diſſolv'd, and the Elements melt with fervent Heat.* And to conclude.

By this Prayer, we Petition to be admitted into *Heaven's Glory and Happineſs*, that when *Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear, we alſo may appear with him in Glory*, that he will be graciouſly pleas'd to beſtow upon us *that Crown of Life*, which *the Holy Jeſus ſhall at that Day give to all that love his Appearance, tho'* in this *World* we may ſuffer *Reproach, Pain, Sickneſs, Poverty* or *Impriſonments* for adhering to our Principles, yet if we *fail not of Heaven's Joys*, It will effectually make amends *for all*, here we *ſuffer with Chriſt*, and are therefore taught to *Pray*, That we may Reign and be glorify'd *with him*, here we drink in *his bitter Cup, Lord grant that we may drink of the Rivers of Pleaſures at thy Right Hand for Evermore.*

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons and one God, be aſcrib'd the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for Ever and Ever. Amen.

FINIS.